

REASONS FOR ALLOWANCE

The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: the closest prior art as cited teaches compositions with ethylene-acrylate copolymers with EPDM added or with epoxy or hydroxy group-containing comonomers or with plasticizers and various crosslinking or vulcanizing agents, and, theoretically, one of ordinary skill in the art could pick and choose all of these components or any combination, but predicting the use and effectiveness of the specific combination of functionalized ethylene-acrylate copolymer with EPDM and plasticizer in combination with dual crosslinking and vulcanization systems would be beyond the skill of one of ordinary skill in the art.

Applicants' claims are, therefore, both novel and unobvious over the closest prior art as cited.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Bernard Lipman whose telephone number is 571-272-1105. The examiner can normally be reached on 8-5 Mon-Fri.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, David Wu can be reached on 571-272-1114. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Bernard Lipman/
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 1796

BL/hs